



## October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

September 26, 2006

Dear Editor:

This month, we celebrate efforts to reduce deaths and find a cure for this disease that affects one in seven women during their lifetimes. In South Carolina, breast cancer is the most diagnosed cancer among women, with thousands of new cases reported each year.

While we don't yet know exactly how to prevent breast cancer, we do know ways to reduce chances of getting the disease. All women are at some degree of risk for breast cancer, but knowing your personal risk factors, like older age and family history, helps your doctor know how frequently you should be screened. If you are at high risk, get checked more often starting at an earlier age. Repeated studies show lifestyle choices like exercising, eating nutritiously, minimizing alcohol consumption and not smoking reduces the risk of breast cancer and many other cancers.

Breast cancer's survival rate is over 90 percent if detected early. I urge women to listen to their bodies, practice self-examinations and pay attention to anything unusual. For more information, contact the Komen Foundation at 1-800-462-9273 or visit [www.healthysc.gov](http://www.healthysc.gov).

Thank you to all who are working this October to increase awareness and promote early detection for breast cancer. I pray this work continues year-round to help find a cure so more women will win the fight against this disease.

Jenny Sanford,  
First Lady  
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*The Healthy SC Challenge is an outcome-based, cooperative effort aimed at encouraging individuals, communities and organizations across the state to show shared responsibility in developing innovative ways to improve the health of South Carolina's citizens. For more information about the Healthy SC Challenge, please visit [www.healthysc.gov](http://www.healthysc.gov), or contact Meghan McGuire at 803-737-2325.*